

**Greeks Open Hospital in
the Capital of Afghanistan**

Coalition Bulletin

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A publication of the Coalition fighting the Global War on Terrorism

**Norway's Battle Group 3
Shares Its Military Expertise**

**Pakistan's President Gen. Pervez Musharraf
Visits United States Central Command**



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Cover photo: The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf, and US Central Command commander Gen. John P. Abizaid speak with reporters at MacDill Air Force Base.

Photo by Spc. Claude Flowers, 304th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Some may ask, well, what's the goal of this Global War on Terror? What's the goal of the effort in Iraq or Afghanistan?"

"Well, tell them it's victory. Unconditional, unapologetic, and unyielding."

Donald H. Rumsfeld,
U.S. Secretary of Defense

Editorial

This shall be my last editorial for the Coalition Bulletin as I returned to my country on the 20th of September. I'll take this opportunity to bid farewell to my colleagues who I leave behind at CENTCOM. I would also like to thank the members of the Public Awareness Working Group who have dedicated their time, intellect and energy to make this magazine what it is.



During my stay here with the Coalition, represented by militaries from 61 different countries, I discovered that it is a nationality within itself that transcends national borders, language barriers and ideological divergences. As we scrutinized and debated the operational situation on a day-to-day basis, I remained assured that we agreed upon one underlying principle, i.e. we shall win the peace.

When I saw the flags of our nations fluttering in the Coalition village I knew that they are not just an expression of individual identity. They remain a principled statement proudly declaring that each of these nations is determined to shape the future so that our next generations can live in peace and harmony. These flags represent determination and will, solidarity and a sense of purpose that life is a precious commodity worth protecting.

The Awareness Group is cognisant of the fact that everything is not perfect, but then it is equally aware that neither is everything all wrong. Perceptions may differ and opinions conflict, but there can be no two views on intent. Who can stand up today in this world of turmoil and state with honesty that all these nations collected here want anything more than a stable, tolerant and peaceful world?

Thus, as I depart this organisation, I would dedicate a moment to all those soldiers, men and women who have died to protect the future of our children. I would very much want these pages to reflect how their sacrifices have allowed us to travel as far as we have come, and all that we have achieved.

Afghanistan has gone to the polls and Iraq has prepared a constitution for its people. Afghan security forces are gradually becoming functional while the Iraqi security forces are now operational. It has only been 4 years since we embarked on OEF and 3 years since OIF. There remains some work to be done and some distance to be travelled.

So while we acknowledge the sacrifices of lives by all our nations, and thank the men and women of who are giving their best, our resolve to prevail must remain pronounced. Now, as I look back on these flags that proudly fly at the Coalition village, I am certain that we will not fail.

Tariq Khan
Brigadier-General, Pakistan
Chairman, Public Awareness Working Group

German, Danish, Italian Navies Save Lives at Sea



**Story by Spc. Claude Flowers,
304th Mobile PAD**

In addition to its many land-based projects, the Coalition is also involved in maritime security operations which establish conditions for security and stability in the CENTCOM Area of Operations and complement the counter-terrorism and security efforts of regional nations. Humanitarian aid is also routinely provided in the course of this work.

On September 6, the German Frigate *Lubeck* provided assistance to the disabled United Arab Emirates-flagged dhow (traditional Arab sailboat) *Al Zahid*, found drifting in the Gulf of Aden



The Italian frigate Granatiere.

German boarding team from *Lubeck* rescues *Al Zahid* dhow.

approximately 25 miles off the coast of Yemen. The *Al Zahid* suffered an engine failure and had been adrift for days, according to the ship's master.


A team of technicians from the *Lubeck* repaired the dhow's engines and provided the crew with food and water. All aboard were in good health.

The *Lubeck*, commanded by Cmdr. Rudiger Solf, deployed to the region in August as part of Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150).

CTF 150 conducts maritime security operations throughout the Red Sea, Arabian Sea, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean.

On September 7, the Danish oil tanker *Eli Maersk* rescued 39 Somali boat people who were aboard a sinking vessel in the Gulf of Aden.

When the *Eli Maersk* requested protection against pirate vessels known to stalk the area, the Italian frigate *Granatiere* raced 70 nautical miles to her aid. The following day, the two ships safely dropped anchors in Djibouti.

The *Granatiere* has been deployed to the Horn of Africa since August 16, tasked to protect merchant vessels from pirates and terrorists. The ship is still under Italian Naval Command within the Coalition Task Force. 



Pakistan's President Musharraf: Winning Hearts and



On photos: President Musharraf meets with CENTCOM officials to strengthen partnerships in the Global War On Terrorism.

Photos by
Maj. Nameddin Karimov and
Spc. Claude Flowers

On September 19, Pakistan's President, General Pervez Musharraf, addressed Senior National Representatives of the Coalition at CENTCOM headquarters in Tampa. The following are excerpts from his speech:

"Cooperation between Pakistan and USA (CENTCOM) has always been excellent and has matured into an intimate relationship at strategic, operational and tactical levels to include sharing of intelligence and efforts in the anti-terrorism drive.

"We are fully satisfied with the cooperation and have no problem whatsoever with our friends and allies at CENTCOM.

"Pakistan is directly or indirectly involved in everything of concern to the international community whether it is terrorism, extremism, democracy issue, womens' rights or nuclear proliferation. There are certain perceptions about Pakistan which, unfortunately, are far from reality and I would like to address some of these.

"The first of these which is commonly found in the media: Is Pakistan a reluctant or a willing partner in the Global War on Terror? Pakistan is a member of the Coalition of its own choice, for its own interests and not because of any other reason. Therefore, there is no question of reluctance. I had imposed a ban on the extremist parties in April 2001... Later, after 9/11, we moved against terrorism even more strongly and independently everywhere in Pakistan.

"To prove my point I would like to discuss the strategy that I have formulated to deal with terrorism. Terrorism and extremism are two separate issues. While terrorism can be dealt with military force, extremism has to be confronted with a strategy to change the hearts and the minds of the people...

"We have already proposed at the international level an Enlightened Moderation and a long term two-pronged strategy I.E. rejection of extremism and socio-economic emancipation.

"Extremism breeds terrorism. Applying force is only aimed at buying time for other measures to address extremism. We have to carefully see the prevalent environment and

then formulate the strategy.

"I would like to inform you of the measures that Pakistan has taken in its anti-terrorism drive. There are three elements in our short-term strategy.

"Banning extremist organizations, squeezing their funding and arresting such individuals who are involved in such activities. We identified a total of 389 individuals out of which 200 have been arrested, and efforts are in hand to arrest the remaining individuals.

"In the past, such elements were arrested under the Pakistan Criminal Ordinance which allowed their release after 10-15 days. Now, they are arrested under the anti-terrorism law and tried in the anti-terrorist courts.

"Banning the publishing, distribution and possession of hate literature. We have identified those elements involved in such activities and have put almost 50% of them behind the bars. Hate literature is not being allowed to be sold in Pakistan.

"Move against those using the mosques to spread hatred. There are hundreds of thousands of mosques in Pakistan and it is very difficult to check all of them.

"Yet we are using every possible means including law enforcement agencies, intelligence agencies and locals to monitor the activities of mosque preachers. Friday sermons are being observed and those found guilty of spreading hatred are being arrested and charged in the anti-terrorist courts.

"Under the long-term measures, the first step is review of the syllabi of

and Minds Is the Key to Success

educational institutions. We had left our religion to semi-literate obscurants who produced unenlightened literature. In order to put the things right, we have asked our scholars to introduce real values of Islam into our school syllabi...

"We have arranged in-depth discourses at (an) national and international level on Islam with a view to taking it to enlightened people. We are also making an effort to show other Muslim countries and the world the true meaning of Islam which is religion of peace, tolerance and compassion.

"We have initiated an Islamic renaissance in Pakistan and want the entire world to benefit from it.

"Forty Islamic scholars from the world have been invited to Pakistan who are working to establish linkages between the

change while the military is buying time...

"Al Qaeda is no longer effective as an organization. It is on the run and its strength has reduced to small insignificant penny pockets. We have achieved a lot but we also know that there is still more to be done. My recommendation to the media is let's help and encourage each other rather than blaming.


"We are looking at fencing the Pak-Afghan Border at selective places so as to minimize the illegal move on either side. We have also undertaken shifting of the refugee camps as these are normally considered good hiding places for the terrorists.

"We have asked the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to shift refugee camps from Pakistan to Afghanistan...



philosophies of our great poet Iqbal and our founder Jinnah so as to convey the true message of Islam and the meaning of Pakistan. They are creating an intellectual route using Islamic teachings for countering terrorism and sending the message of enlightened moderation to all Muslim countries.

"Through the Organization of Islamic Countries we are requesting all Muslim countries to do the same and apply all available instruments to bring about a

"Pakistan has traveled a long way. Our economy, which was in a poor state, has been stabilized and the system of governance improved. The effects of these steps have now started to reach the people whereby their quality of life is improving. Development and improvement in social sector, education and health has received major attention and is resulting in stability in the country." 

The complete text of President Musharraf's speech is available at <http://www.centcom.mil>.

Musharraf, Abizaid Meet the Press

**By Spc. Claude Flowers,
304th Mobile PAD**

Following his speech before Senior National Representatives at United States Central Command headquarters on September 19, Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf addressed print and broadcast journalists to discuss the Global War on Terror, as well as recent successes in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. At the press conference, held at MacDill Air Force Base, he was joined by Gen. John Abizaid, commander, U.S. CENTCOM.

"We have to succeed on two tracks, the political track and the military track," Musharraf said. "I personally think that the political track is certainly going on the right lines."




Regarding the elections in Afghanistan, which had occurred the Sept. 18, he said, "We are extremely glad that the elections were held in a very, very peaceful manner."

He added that the briefings he received at CENTCOM assured him that the joint fighting against terrorism and extremism will not only be sustained and reinforced, but it is going forward on the right lines.

Abizaid said the Coalition's efforts against terrorism and extremism can't be won without Pakistan.

He explained that because of its shared border, Pakistan is strategically positioned to defeat insurgents attempting to enter Afghanistan from the southeast.

"I can certainly say that there is no nation in the Coalition that has done more to attack al-Qaida, to take them off the streets, to attack their leadership, than Pakistan," Abizaid said. 



Coalition Partners in War and Beyond: Recent Earthquake Relief Efforts in Pakistan



On the fateful morning of Oct. 8, 2005, Pakistan was hit by a powerful earthquake measuring 7.8 on the Richter scale. This natural calamity left approximately 55,000 people dead, 80,000 injured, and 2.8 million homeless. This was one of the biggest disasters in history.

The difficult nature of the terrain and harsh weather have hampered relief efforts launched by the government of Pakistan. The world community has rushed in to assist.

Coalition countries in particular are at work in this hour of need. More than 75 nations are offering financial assistance, equipment, and supplies for the needy. With the active support of these countries and the U.S. in particular, Pakistan has been able to save several thousand precious lives. Major international organizations like the United Nations, European Union, North Atlantic Treaty Organization and World Bank are also providing strong support. These steps will pave the way for the country to move beyond this crisis. These operations are testament to the fact that this Coalition is united both in war and in peace.



Ukraine's Government Flies Aid to Islamabad in an Historic Airlift

The Antonov An-225 "Mriya," the world's largest aircraft, was used by Ukraine as part of the Coalition's relief efforts in Pakistan. On October 21, one flight of this aircraft delivered 168 tons of humanitarian aid to the Islamabad airport with a total worth of \$2M. An additional \$1.2M in medical donations is contributed. This is already the country's biggest humanitarian aid response since gaining independence in 1991.



The "Mriya" was designed for the transportation of the Soviet Space Shuttle "Buran" by the Antonov Design Bureau, headquartered in Kiev, Ukraine. It can carry a maximum load of 551,150 lbs (250,000 kg), boasts a wingspan of 290 ft (88.4 m), and is capable of reaching speeds of 528 miles per hour (850 kilometres per hour). Only one exists, but a second is under construction. The Antonov Design Bureau previously had built reliable, large cargo aircraft such as the Antonov An-124 "Ruslan."



The Bulgarian 5th Infantry Battalion Fulfills Civil-Military Plans and Programs in Iraq



On photos: The Bulgarian Army at work in Ad-Diwaniyah, Iraq. Since 2003, the Bulgarians have completed more than 30 civil-military projects.

**Story by Maj. Yassen Kirchev,
Bulgarian Armed Forces**

The mission of the 5th Infantry battalion of the Bulgarian Army in Ad-Diwaniyah, Iraq is multifaceted. The soldiers guarantee the security of military personnel and civilians in this south central Iraqi city which boasts a population of over 390,000.

But not only do the soldiers carry out their military duties, they also perform a variety of civic and humanitarian activities. The Battalion Command continues to establish and keep in close contact with local leaders, meeting with representatives of the municipal authorities, the media, the Union of Businessmen, and the University of Ad Diwaniyah on a regular basis.

The results are good relationships with these institutions, which have declared that the Bulgarian soldiers are perceived by

locals as good friends.


Since 2003, the Bulgarian Armed Forces have facilitated more than 30 civil-military projects in the provinces of Kerbala and Kadisia, spanning the fields of education, health care, security, transportation, and civil infrastructure.

More projects are currently under way. In the town of al-Budair, 45 km east of Ad Diwaniyah, Bulgarian battalion commander Lt. Col. Kuzmov officially opened a renovated school where 200 children are expected to study.

The Battalion Command donated books and other supplies to the pupils. Across the provinces, additional schools and a police station are being constructed and renovated with Bulgarian assistance. A water supply system is also being built in the vicinity of Ad Diwaniyah.

Bulgaria's 400 troops stationed in Iraq are part of the Multinational Division Central South (MND-CS), a Polish-led major subordinate command of the Multinational Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) which also includes peacekeepers from the Republic of Armenia, Kingdom of Denmark, Republic of Kazakhstan, Republic of Latvia, Republic of Lithuania, Mongolia, Kingdom of Norway, Republic of Poland, Republic of Romania, Republic of Salvador, Slovak Republic, Ukraine and the United States of America.

The mission of the Multinational Division Central South is to train and assist the Iraqi Army. A properly trained and capable IA will guarantee a safe and secure Iraqi society.

MND CS units support the IA in operations within given areas of responsibility to create conditions for successful democratic transformation in Iraq. 



Bulgaria's Contributions to the Global War on Terrorism:

- Provided a nuclear, biological, and chemical decontamination unit to Afghanistan as part of the International Security Assistance Force
- Hosted the deployment of six U.S. KC-135 aircraft and 200 support personnel at Burgas, the first stationing of foreign forces in Bulgaria since World War II
- Donated and airlifted arms and ammunition to the Afghan National Army

By sending over 400 troops to rebuild Iraq and train security forces, Bulgaria is playing an important role in helping the Iraqi people. Also, with a contingent in Afghanistan, it is protecting the modern world by containing terrorists at the source.



Certifying the Afghan National Army



The Norwegian-led Battle Group 3 Recently Completed the First of Its Courses Designed to Train the Troops of the Afghan National Army in State-of-the-art Tactics, Doctrines and Procedures



(Left) During the training; (top right) Lieutenant Colonel Rune Sørøra inspects the Afghan troops. (above right) the Afghan troops appreciated the formal hand-over of diplomas.

**Story and photos by
Knut Helge Grandhagen,
Press and Information
Officer, Afghanistan**

KABUL – For several years, Afghanistan has been the primary focus of Norway's military operations, and he recipient of extensive Norwegian humanitarian aid. By helping and repatriating Afghan refugees in Pakistan, giving emergency aid to Afghanistan's drought-afflicted areas, clearing landmines, repairing the country's infrastructure, donating food and providing basic health care, Norway has done a great deal to aid the country.

The good deeds continue. In September of this year, Norway became the lead nation of the International Security Assistance Force's Provincial Reconstruction Team, a cadre which maintains order while the government of Afghanistan builds its own military.

At the forefront of this effort is the Norwegian-led Battle Group 3 in Kabul. During September, BG3 conducted its 1,000th patrol of the capital city, and it also recently completed the first of many courses developed to educate the troops of the ANA in modern tactics, techniques and procedures. Hungarian forces assisted with the tutoring.

Feedback about the training, from both the instructors and students, was very positive. The exam consisted of a series of exercises which challenged the Afghans' soldiering skills, from weapon handling to patrol-



ling and react-to-contact drills.

The BG3 Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Rune Sørøra, observed the exam and gave



Lieutenant Colonel Sørøra (right) with Colonel Massoud of Afghan National Army observe the training.


positive feedback to the Afghan troops. "You have all done a good job and shown impressive progress," he told them after the first weapons-handling portion of the test. "I look forward to coming back when you are tested after completing the more advanced courses.

"It is, however, important to remember that the profession you are now embarking on is one in which you are never fully trained. There is always room for improvement. I therefore recommend that you continue training both during these courses, and also in the future when you finish your training here."

Sørøra also passed on some of his personal experience. "When I was doing my junior officer's training, we were tested in weapons skills every day, and every evening and night I would continue training on my own until I knew my weapon inside out. I was able to take it apart and put it together blindfolded. When I finished my training, my weapon was part of my own body, and I would recommend that you all continue to aspire towards the same level of professionalism," he said.

The Afghan Company Commander, Captain Abdul Vehab, expressed his gratitude on behalf of the Afghan troops to the BG3 instructors.

"We will not always remain in Kabul, where the situation is reasonably peaceful," he stated. "We can be moved anywhere in the country on short notice, also to places where it is less peaceful. It is therefore important that we are well trained."

The Afghan troops received a formal diploma as proof that they had passed the training conducted by Battle Group 3. The operation officer of the Afghan division, Colonel Massoud, said, "This has been a golden chance to learn modern tactics and doctrines from our colleagues from Norway and Hungary, and we appreciate the training they have given us. It ensures that we reach a higher level of training and readiness, if we should come into battle in the future." 



New Greek Hospital Opens in Kabul



Chief of Greek Army General Staff, Lt. Gen. Nikolaos Douvas (right), shakes hands during his September visit.

**Story by Brigadier General (HA)
Georgios Bardamaskos,
Greek Senior National
Representative at USCENTCOM**

The secret is out: The Greek Armed Forces' 229th Mobile Field Surgical Hospital (MFSH) is one of the best medical facilities that have ever operated in Afghanistan. That's not a boast, it's an opinion shared by medical experts and officials alike. The 229th MFSH exists to support the International Security Assistance Force and the Afghan people, who deserve a bright, promising future.

Since 1950, Greece, despite its limited manpower, has participated in multi-national peacekeeping operations throughout the world, providing troops, units and expeditionary corps as well as military observers and humanitarian assistance. The country's first mission was in Korea, and today it serves in Afghanistan, proudly supporting the ISAF.

The 229th MFSH has the following capabilities, provided by the Greek Armed Forces:

- 2 Surgical Operating Rooms with 3 Surgical Teams
- 1 Recovery Unit
- 1 Intensive Care Unit with a 2 bed capacity
- 1 Bacteriology Laboratory
- 1 X-Ray Section
- 1 Dental Unit
- 1 Pharmacy
- 1 Veterinary Laboratory
- 1 Casualty Staging Unit
- 1 Outpatient Clinic
- 1 Mental Health Section
- 2 Stabilization Teams
- 2 Ambulances (1 Armored, 1 Un-armored)
- 30 Bed Patient Capacity

The 229th MFSH quickly distinguished itself under difficult conditions. At the Kabul International Airport in Afghanistan. The 229th MFSH is a "Role II" (sick call and Advanced Trauma Life Saving) facility capable of treating and providing continuous support for 30 patients.

The hospital opened on 19 August, achieving full operational capability just three days later. The rapid establishment of its full operational capability will maximize the contribution of the 229th MFSH to the ISAF for the duration of its 18 month deployment.

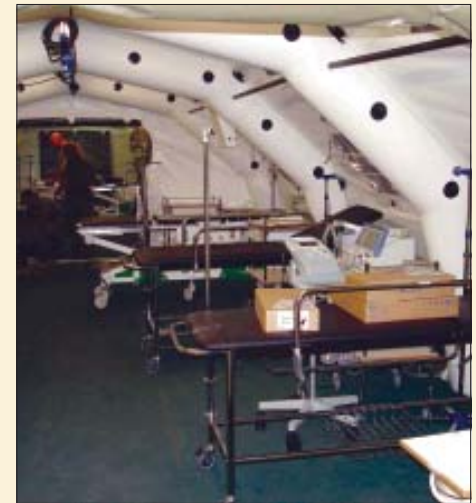
The hospital treats military patients, civilians serving in Afghanistan including members of International Organizations, Non-Government Organizations, and, of course, Afghan citizens.

Presently the 229th MFSH has 65 personnel assigned, with medical doctors of different specialties, nurses, medical




Above and below: Inside the Greek Armed Forces' 229th Mobile Field Surgery Hospital.

auxiliaries and other support personnel. Among them, 48 come from Greece, five from Hungary, four from Albania, four from Croatia and four from the Former Yugoslav



vian Republic of Macedonia. Security for the Hospital is provided by a robust detachment from Belgium.

As of presstime, the Hospital has treated more than 420 patients. Besides providing excellent medical support, strong bonds of friendship are formed by the close interaction between the medical staff and its patients.

The Director of the 229th MFSH, Lieutenant Colonel (MC) G. Petrovas, said that all of the patients are very happy with the medical services provided. As the Afghans proclaim, "God sent the Greeks to save us." 





\$450,000 Cultural Center in Nasiriyah Is Presented by the Italian Government



In August, troops from Italy participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom literally made their mark on the southeastern city of Nasiriyah.

The capital of the governate of Dhi Qar, Nasiriyah has long been famous for its museum which collects Abbasid, Assyrian, Babylonian and Sumerian artifacts. Now the city, which lies alongside the Euphrates River, has a new landmark.

General Pietro Costantino, commanding officer of the Italian Task Force in Iraq,

laid down the first stone of a cultural center that the Italian government has presented to the region's citizens.

Ahmad al-Shaykh, Vice Governor of Dhi Qar, stated that, "the building will be placed in the center of the city and will be built over the ruins of the former employee club. It will cover an area of 500 hundred square meters."

The center's infrastructure will cost \$450,000 dollars and, according Vice Governor al-Shaykh, "will be fitted with a theater that seats 200, a library, a public Internet access point, a gallery area and some multi-purpose expo rooms. The project will be completed in 180 days and will be headed by a team of Italian engineers."

In the meantime, an athletic stadium, designed and built by Italy, is going to be completed. Ali al Daajili, general

manager linking the Italian contingency to the Dhi Qar regional council, said, "the Italian builders' team has already begun the final stage of the sporting facilities of the city."

Dajili added that, "the stadium will be capable of holding 5000 people.

The building is divided in open areas dedicated to a variety of disciplines, an indoor area, a bicycle track plus other services." The Italian initiative remarks the friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

The Italian forces serving in Iraq, while enforcing stability and security, are helping to construct educational, health care, cultural, fresh water distribution and sewer facilities.



Italy's contributions to Dhi Qar have been numerous and significant.

Italian medics have performed over 5700 surgeries. Explosive Ordnance Device crews have cleared mines from over 10,000 square miles of the province.

The "Carabinieri" law enforcement officials have trained Iraqi police officers, while the "Folgore" paratroopers have trained officers in the Iraqi Army.

As an additional investment in Iraq's future, Italy's foreign ministry is developing a series of programs to teach journalism to aspirant Iraqi news reporters.

Italian civilians have taken the Iraqi people to their hearts as well. This summer, it was announced that the University of Naples would grant scholarships to 10 Iraqis pursuing doctorates in medicine, computer science, law and history. ¹⁰



Romania Is Bringing Together All the Players to Establish a Better Future for Afghanistan



Mr. S.M. Hadid, Deputy Minister of Afghanistan's Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled, shakes the hand of Lt. Col. Mircea Romocia, Chief of Ministry Engagement Team No. 1.

Story by Lt. Col. Mircea Romocia, Romanian Armed Forces

The government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is divided into several ministries, including the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Borders and Tribal Affairs. By working closely with each of these entities, Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan strives to better the lives of the Afghan people as well as the effectiveness of the Afghan National Army.

As the chief of Ministry Engagement Team No. 1, which is dedicated to issues of governance and justice, I work with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled, Ministry of Information & Culture & Tourism, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs, and Ministry of Women's Affairs. My counterpart in MET No. 2 is responsible for tasks related to economic infrastructure.

I asked U.S. Col. Robert Duffy, governance and justice division chief of Political Military Integration, how I should interact with these eight ministries. He said that at this stage of country reconstruction, we must improve national security and build the ca-

pabilities of government. At the same time, we need to keep in contact with all of the other ministries to ensure that they can accomplish their own important goals. We are here for a limited period of time and everybody wants the Afghans to take care of their own country. To quote a proverb, the international community has to, "teach them how to fish, not to give them the fish," so it is imperative that the Afghans understand how to grow their economy, build a budget and solve their many domestic challenges.

Effective Civil Affairs work is vital to our mission success. Civil Affairs operations involve coordination with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the International Security Assistance Force as well as non-governmental organizations and donors.

Twenty-three years of war have aggravated an already poverty-stricken Afghan economy. There seems to be no immediate solution. Everything is broken. The chronic conditions which affect the country – illiteracy and poor educational facilities, unemployment, financial insecurity, poor health conditions, damaged infrastructure – are major factors inhibiting improvement.


"In fact, with all the ministries, we're starting from zero, so we'll assess the situations of each one," said Romanian Army LTC Laurentiu Fotin, chief of MET 2. "We'll do our best and support the common effort with the international community to achieve a moderate, stable and representative Afghanistan."

Most of the 15 ministries engaged by the Ministry Engagement Teams have similar problems, like logistical gaps, shortages of skilled personnel, and a lack of funding. The biggest challenges are faced by the Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled, which advocates for Afghans who suffer from war-related injuries or other handicaps. It provides prosthetic limbs, physical therapy, and classes for children with special needs, as well as other services.

"We try to do the best we can for these poor people within the limits and capabilities of our country," said Mr. Sayed Mohamad Hadid, the Deputy Minister for the Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled. "We don't have computers, but we also don't have electricity for work. It is very difficult to design a proper system to register and work with two million disabled and martyr people only using paper and pencil. These people are affected not only physically by war but also psychological because they are socially marginalized."



Lt. Col. Fotin and Lt. Col. Handy converse with an important representative of the Ministry.

My last visit to the Ministry of Martyrs & Disabled in Kabul, with the ISAF liaison officer, Italian Army Major Domenico Costa, was a model of professional cooperation and coordination. We assessed the situation together and planned to get more involved with all of the organizations to find more ways to help the Afghan people. 



French Navy Takes Over Task Force 150

**Cdr. Bruno Kral,
Conseiller Marine Detachement
Français USCENTCOM**

Task Force 150 is under the direction of the Combined Maritime Forces Component Commander (CFMCC). It operates in support of the OEF in the Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden and Red Sea, and is responsible for Maritime Security Operations (MSO), such as Counter the illegal movements of terrorists, weaponry and supporting materials in International waters; and Prevent International terrorist organizations from executing terrorist attacks against key maritime interests in the region.



Embarked in the French command and logistic ship *Var*, Vice Admiral Mazars is commanding a force of about 10 ships, belong-

ing to United States, Great Britain, Pakistan, Germany and EUROMARFOR (*FS Var*, *FS La Fayette*, *FS Premier-Maître l'Her*, *ITS Libeccio*).

Recently French Vice Admiral Jacques Mazars, Tactical Deputy Commander of the "Force d'Action Navale" (ALFAN), and Commander of EUROMARFOR, assumed command of the Task Force 150 (TF 150) from British Royal Navy Commodore Tony Rix.

This is the third time, since the beginning of *Operation Enduring Freedom* (OEF) that France has held this post.



Couple Supports Troops with Banana Bread

**Story and photo by
Spc. Claude Flowers, 304th Mobile PAD**

Albert Davis of Largo, Fla., may have retired from the U.S. Navy in 1973, but he's still serving his country and doing all that he can for the military. For the last 15 years, he and his wife Barbara have been diligently baking loaves of banana bread for American troops serving around the world.

How many?

Seven an hour, 94 per day, every day – so many that on Oct. 14 the couple presented Army Gen. John Abizaid, commander of U.S. Central Command, with their 75,000th loaf during a ceremony at CENTCOM headquarters in Tampa.

The Davises began baking pumpkin bread in 1988 for patients at the MacDill Air Force Base hospital.

"It wasn't every week," Barbara explained. "It might be on the holidays – Thanksgiving, Halloween."

The launch of Operation Desert Shield in 1990 prompted the couple to move in a new direction once they heard reports that troops weren't eating a potassium-rich diet.

"They were having problems with bananas rotting on the pallets in the desert. That's when we started making the banana

bread," Barbara said. "We developed a recipe; we had it checked. It was good, really high potassium-content banana bread. It tasted good. It took us two months to get a recipe that would hold together."

Even after Desert Storm ended, the Davises continued to cook. Today, servicemembers participating in operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom are the recipients of the couple's generosity.



"It's funny. As I travel around the theater, I see the loaves of banana bread all over the place," Abizaid said. "I've seen them in Iraq and Afghanistan, in Pakistan, in other places, and I've certainly seen them in our headquarters."

The couple started delivering to CENTCOM's Tampa HQ in 2002. That September, they presented then-commander Gen. Tommy Franks with their 25,000th loaf.

"General Franks received us so humbly," Barbara said. "To this day, we try to take him bread."

The Davises begin their work each day before dawn, making every loaf by hand. Their high standard of quality control even includes shaving the bananas. "There are no strings attached," Al said. "The strings on the bananas would make the bread tougher."

The Davises now have their aspirations set on baking 100,000 loaves. Gratefulness keeps them motivated.

"With the military protecting our shores and the world in general, we at home can do nothing better than to support them," Al said.

"We have the best military in the world. We need good citizens to stand behind them and support them. They do a fantastic job, they really do. Together, we shine."

At the ceremony, Abizaid told the Davises that their hard work is appreciated.

"On behalf of all of us at CENTCOM, thanks for all of your support. We can't win the war without the support of the American people. When people go over and above the call of duty like you folks have done, we can only give you our eternal gratitude."